

## The Quarry

"All this dog business is new to me. My former dogs were freelancers so to speak." To break the ice in the small room.

"We can do without metaphor," struck Adelaide Brosky.

"We can?" shrugged Rich while the staring bitch sat down to lick her front paws and Rex trembled. As Rex edged round to study the other dog's plumped-down rear, his shadow absurdly long in the dusty shafts of late-afternoon sunlight, Adelaide peered at Rich's legs.

"I wore shorts...I...warm...it's been."

"There is no uniform."

"Just...just tell me what to do and I'll..."

"It's not you, it's Rex! He does everything wrong and at the wrong moment. Well, try rubbing his flanks, Mr. Hager," advised Adelaide, somewhat softer.

"She's the one, I think." Rich became paternal. "He's interested."

"For God's sakes! She's an aristocrat! How can you expect...?"

"Holy God will you look at that! Rex! Jesus!"

"Mr! Hager."

"Rich!"

"All right then, Rich! That, Rich, is not the only necessary ingredient, no matter what you men think." A thrust of loamy spring air from outside led him to wonder just *what* he had been thinking: her leaning over in all those ways...but that couldn't be--she sniffed at practically everything. He did know he had to reach a bathroom in the next fifteen minutes, two dinner Heinekens working on him. She lifted up the bitch's rear.

"I'm not thinking anything and neither is Rex," he concluded in the energizing ozone.

"Unfortunately." There followed an abrupt, scrabbled closing between the dogs, almost, but then an aimless circling away which carried on so long that Rich studied the citations stuck with ribbons, framed and unframed on the knotty pine walls. FIRST IN CLASS, one said, TOPBELLE-OF-PENNYWHISTLE/Top 'o Quarry Kennels.

"Encourage him!" Adelaide finally shot.

"B-B-B-Blow in his ear?" he muttered.

"Please please don't let this moment pass. Seize it!" She

seemed to be yelling at Rich and not the dogs.

"Good fellow Rex! There's a good brave fellow!"

"And you're our lovely honey sweetheart yes you is!" warmed Adelaide to the other animal. "Yes you is too!" As she coaxed, she fixed Rich's eyes, hers gray as stone and seemingly mesmerized by what they had been witnessing or not witnessing. "We're getting there and we will have success," she hissed, whistling at the last.

"That's nice."

"Then they'll rest and we will have a well-deserved drink!"

"That's nice. Uh, to relax?" The day itself relaxed outside the window, sky in exhaled bars of gold and purple. Achill breeze slid in, lifting a ribbon from the darkening wall.

"To relax," she whispered huskily as Rex rose to his hind legs and ran full tilt at the now seemingly less-reluctant bitch, "to just the right" and her voice dropped off "degree." Rich felt a knee buckle. She was not wearing a bra.

She is about to present!" Adelaide McMillan Brosky announced, in tone as if the Queen had entered.

"Good!" Rich all but yelled, "cause I gotta find the little boy's room post haste. You got lights around here?"

"You must altogether forget yourself in these situations. Always! And believe me they don't need lights."

"I do. Bathroom!" His insistent altering of the high tone found Adelaide McMillan Brosky biting her lip.

Things were not to be just yet either, and she in her continued frustration eventually blamed Rich, ordering him to leave.

"We'll handle it without you it's...my fault really," she had lied after the blowup, "too much to expect of you your...first time."

In the quickly deteriorating light, she blew matted hair from her eye in the manner of the kind of woman ferociously intent on sex for others. "I want to to to make sure you get what you're paying for," she winked, but innappropriately, he felt, spastic. He was leaving all right, the vibes had soured too much to even talk. Those knotty pine walls, shiny earlier, had taken on a gumminess since twilight, the black glass on the some of the pictures and awards now clouded. Soon he was running through the semi-darkness outside... *leave the goddamn dogs alone without all the goddamn experts! First she comes on like a--* here he imitated snorts, and a goatish gallop...but before long they lost their parody and possessed him.

The inner man, however, continued to sneer. *No metaphor! Christ who cares about things like that? And then it's the ole icehouse! Jesus Christ, and who she think she's fooling with*

*that "first time" crack?* Still galloping somewhat, he veered away from the quarry rim.

(Below, two were celebrating mutual promotions--the Doctors Misker, he of Drama, she Philosophy-Aesthetics--with a cold chicken and Chilean Chablis supper laid on a white tablecloth which held its own immaculate light against encroaching dark. The male Dr. Misker had been teasing about the possible intrusion of a bear, a less-than-remote possibility as they both, with academic certainty, knew.)

Far above them, Rich was practically bouncing from tree to tree. *If she wants me throw her in fuckin bed like fuckin animals or something or or or under the b-b-b--bushes I will, I would, but it's yes-no yes-no yes-no yes-no yes-no! Big woman...never had luck with... My old Celeste...pipecleaner with tits. So, no luck with any kind of woman.*

"She's dog people. What the hell do you expect?" Celeste's hammering voice visited, saying the same kind of thing she said about everybody.

She's an aristocrat! THE CLASSY DOGS DO IT WITH STYLE ohyeah! She's preSENTING it now! Bullshit! *And her practically preSENTING it to me leaning over all those goddamn c-c-c-c-calculated ways with those big, swaying brrrrrrrr-...!* Here he rolled, nearly black against a purple sky, over a small sea of Bud Lite cans, throwing out his arms, birdlike, for balance.

*Well I don't need any more fire-ice women. Nearly got canned with that last one playing with my head.* Sick and tottering in remembrance as vines snapped his legs, he stopped running and sat down to pant on a shelf-like rock.

Mr. Tensdorf an ax-edge behind his spotless desk: "You don't have to tell me what's personally wrong but you've got to pick up in your work or--they're on me from above as I know you understand. We'll all go anyway if we're taken over."

"You fried my brain, Celeste," he breathed into the last of dusk, but couldn't bring her image completely to mind; when he did it switched to breeder Adelaide, braless, in fact blouseless, and leaning over him with eyes the colors of flame. "Learn to relax," she admonished. He sprung up.

Soon the very real Adelaide Brosky was out stalking him. She noted glimpses through remnants of afterlight, his legs pumping through black, tangled vines. "Rich! Come back for our little drink! It all turned out most magnificently!"

He had heard her voice, the shattering vibrations, but couldn't decipher a word then or now, beelining in the opposite direction. Finally he again reached the quarry rim where he pulled back in time, and could wait no longer to relieve

himself. Unfortunately the singleminded woman gave out with such a shriek at a critical point that he tried the modest yet impossible task of covering up, such action thrusting him a few inches forward where the ground gave out, and he consequently struck a stout, angled oak, and after, a practically horizontal maple, before his windmilling free-fall into the quarry.

Picnickers the Doctors Misker felt the oddly-spaced drips, and then clods dented the white tablecloth. "Do you suppose," resonated Trent dramatically, "it's a BAY-URRR up there in the gloom and gloam?" Before Merry could laugh, Rich landed in a limb fifteen feet above and both professors emitted horrified squeals.

Philosophy-Aesthetics recovered first, hissing "For gosh sakes, Trent, zip up his--"

The other Doctor Misker's voice shook the dark leaves. "Shall I climb limb-to-limb like an AY-YUP?"

#### AT THE FIFTH PRECINCT

Detective: (reading) "... his great hairy legs!"--Jesus H. Christ!

Cop: Her statement, Ms. Adelaide McMiller or something Brosky. The other lady, the college doctor one, said something like (high and nasal ) "Whereupon the unknown-to-us falling person became draped over a protruding limb, and my husband, Dr. Trent Bentham Misker, attempted..."

Detective: Don't put everything down Jesus H. Christ! You didn't put...?

Cop: "...enormously engorged!" I didn't put that down neither, or "sporadic earlier-felt evidences of possible urination or, perhaps, semen"--think the dude with the VOICE said that last one.

Detective: Yeah well I guess that poor idiot had a real conflict swaying up there over that big hole and wondering what to do with it. (Patting Burger King napkin back of neck, peering at it for two beats) They call this Spring? This aint Spring. At any rate, not relevant 'bout sexy boy: no rape or nothing. You gotta learn...pick out the real stuff from piddle-prattle. (a beat ) They got executed...years ago...hung...got that way.

Cop: Lucky them.

Detective: It's no big deal as I said. So what's latest report on asshole anyway?

Cop: Which one?

Detective: You do need a scorecard, don't you?--though all the middle names help. One they extracted from the tree, old what's- his-face.

Cop: Broke everything but his lovestick.

Detective: He can do that next time.

Cop: Wouldn't mind breaking mine on that Brosky woman I'll tell you that.

Detective: Don't bother. I know the type: too much listening while she bubbles her inane shit. You're better off with a pro.

Cop: Oh yeah and how about AIDS?

Detective: It's faster.